Gateway

Volume 4
Number 13
March 18, 1988

The ARRL Packet-Radio Newsletter

PHASE 3C LAUNCH DATE SET

Arianespace announced that May 26 is the scheduled launch date for AMSAT's Phase 3C spacecraft. In addition, Arianespace, the marketing arm of the European Space Agency, has added a new launch in their launch sequence and renumbered the mission that will carry Phase 3C. The new sequence is as follows:

March 11: V-21 with SPACENET IIIR/GEOSTAR RØ1 and TELECOM 1C, which was launched successfully on schedule.

May 11: V-22 with Intelsat V.

May 26: V-23 with AMSAT Phase 3C, METEOSAT and PANAMSAT.

AMSAT launch support preparations will swing into high gear in early April with the dispatch of AMSAT DL and AMSAT NA support teams to the launch site in Kourou, French Guiana.

If all goes well and the launch takes place as scheduled, the satellite may be available for general use by the end of June. Therefore, this spring would be a great time to get your stations ready for the most powerful and capable OSCAR ever.

(A reminder: Many of the technical details of Phase 3C are being published in Amateur Satellite Report, which is a membership service of AMSAT, so be sure that your membership is current. If you have not renewed, you should do so immediately so you will not miss any of the information crucial to your getting your Phase 3C station up and running and ready for the commencement of operations.)

from AMSAT NA News Service

NEWS FROM TUCSON

The TAPR annual meeting has come and gone and while no startling revelations were made, very satisfying progress is being made on many fronts. Here's a summary of the meeting.

Some progress is slowly being made on getting 56-kbit/s modems on the air.

UoSAT C is scheduled for launch in late 1988 (see story above). It will include the Packet Communications Experiment (PCE), which is a general-access, 24-hour-per-day availability resource.

TexNet is slowly expanding; they now have 4 or 5 nodes on the air.

San Diego Packet Radio Association's PS-186 packet switch is in its first artwork revision. Demonstrations were shown of the board running MS-DOS for software development and running NET/ROM as a node. Other software targeted for it are a specialized operating system and ROSE (formerly known as COSI).

AMSAT is focusing more strongly on packet resources in satellites. On January 1, 1989, they plan to launch two identical satellites, PACSAT A and B, covering most of the Western Hemisphere. AMSAT Phase 4, due to launch in 1992, will have tremendous digital data capabilities, up to and including a T1 data rate (1.544-Mbit/s) transponder.

TCP/IP has made much progress in the last year with many new improvements including support of AX.25 level 2 connects. Interest in TCP/IP is growing rapidly.

ROSE (RATS Open System Environment), formerly COSI, has an extensive list of scheduled enhancements.

AEA's RFM-220 RF modem will be shipping soon. The cost of the unit will be substantially higher than expected because of changes due to FCC certification and component availability.

Software 2000 has now shipped firmware for over 1200 NET/ROM nodes to 20 countries, 48 states and the District of Columbia. California has the most nodes with 87. Version 1.3 will probably be the last 8-bit version of NET/ROM; it has been successfully ported to the PS-186 communications controller board.

TAPR is intending to start development of a DSP-based "front-end processor" that will handle all sorts of modulations and convert them to FSK for use with a standard TNC. These include PSK, BPSK and multicarrier modulation for HF FSK. (This last is intended to be able to transmit 1200 bit/s at a modulation rate of 45 bauds.) The unit will be designed to minimize distortion due to multipath.

The TAPR Board of Directors voted to close down the Tucson office in an effort to conserve funds. The day-to-day business will be handled by the secretary out of her home.

by Orv Beach, WB6WEY from The I-Frame, The Newsletter of the Southern California Digital Communications Council

TNC 2 VERSION 1.1.5 IS KISSED

Mike Chepponis, K3MC, author of KISS for the TNC 2, has merged KISS with version 1.1.5 of the TNC 2 code which is now available from Tucson Amateur Packet Radio, Inc. (TAPR). (KISS code, for "Keep It Simple, Stupid," is required to allow the TNC 2 to work with KA9Q's TCP/IP software.)

TAPR will program your EPROM (27C256) for $2 plus a prepaid return mailer. TAPR has blank 27C256 EPROMs available for $10. If you choose to buy the EPROM from TAPR, the mailer and postage are included in the purchase price of the blank EPROM, but an additional $2 for is required for programming ($12 total).

TNC 2 version 1.1.5 requires 32-kbyte RAM installed in the TNC 2. If you have not upgraded to 32-kbyte RAM, the required RAM and upgrade documentation are available from TAPR for $20.

Foreign shipping addresses must include sufficient postage to assure airmail delivery. If you do not know the airmail rates, add $1 per EPROM.

TAPR's address is Box 22888, Tucson, AZ 85734.

from Andy Freeborn, NØCCZ,
via CompuServe's HamNet

ODNCC TO COORDINATE PACKET RADIO IN OREGON

At the Salem (Oregon) Hamfair on February 20, Oregon Region Relay Council (ORRC), which is Oregon's voice repeater coordination body, recognized Oregon Digital Network Coordination Council (ODNCC) as the coordinating body for packet radio in Oregon. ODNCC plans to work closely with its counterparts in British Columbia, California, Idaho, Nevada and Washington in network planning and with ORRC in spectrum-use planning.

All owners of existing or planned network nodes or digipeaters in Oregon are requested to contact ODNCC in order to compile a mailing list and schedule a meeting as soon as possible. ODNCC's address is 7860 SW 69TH Av, Portland, OR 97223. Messages may also be sent to ODNCC @ WA7ARI.

from Doug McMurdo, W7XI

NEW YORK EASTERN BACKBONE NETWORK COMMITTEE MEETS

On February 27, the Eastern Backbone Network Committee of the New York State Packet Forum (NYSPF) met in the interest of advancing the state of the packet network in New York State, as stated by Phil Bradway, KB2HQ, NYSPF Chairman. The network is being established in the eastern and western parts of the state, but linking of Western and Eastern New York and Western New England has been lacking to date.

An around-the-table introduction of all the participants followed. The floor was then turned over to Doug Sharp, WB2KMY, NYSPF Eastern Backbone Network Committee Chairman, for a presentation on the state of the Eastern Backbone Network.

Doug passed out a handout on the Eastern Backbone Network (EBN) and stated that "hidden transmitters" were the biggest problem with the amateur packet network today. The backbone network must be on different frequencies than the users (people and PBBSs). The present EBN is being implemented with NET/ROM nodes linked on 220 MHz and 440 MHz. EBN is structured into three subnetworks, the Local Area Network (LAN), the Regional Network, and the Area Network.

A general discussion followed with the representatives of each organization/area presenting their local status and problems/concerns for networking. The group then entered into a discussion on what actions would be taken in the near future (three month period) to improve the state of the EBN.

- o An Area Network Link on 440 MHz would be put into place linking the Utica area (preferably Smith Hill) with Mt. Greylock (K1FFK) in Western Massachusetts. The committee will meet with the Utica group to discuss details and implications.

- o The WA2UMX PBBS will be linked to K1FFK on 220 MHz.

- o The KA2FQE digipeater will become a dual-port NET/ROM node on the 145.01 MHz and linked to K1FFK on 220 MHz.

- o It was suggested that MAPRA investigate the possibility of linking directly into the K1FFK node on 220 MHz or remaining on the N.E. 220 MHz frequency depending on interference. Testing will be done on a direct link from WA1FHB to K1FFK.

- o The status of linking the Western New York area (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse) with the Utica end of EBN will be discussed at the NYSPF meeting to be held in late March in Batavia.

from George Chapek, N2AIG, Secretary NYSPF

SOUTH AFRICAN NETWORKING CONFERENCE

AMSAT of South Africa (SA AMSAT) held a successful networking conference on February 20 according to its president, Hans Van de Groenendaal, ZS6AKV. The conference was attended by several Johannesburg amateurs as well as George Hunt, 7P8DL, Ed Douglas 7P8DX and Phil Gray, KA7TWQ, who is working for CARE in Maputo.

The Lesotho Pilot Packet Radio Project was reviewed and it was decided to continue with the 2-meter link to the Johannesburg-based DCE Gateway. Initial tests showed an additional digipeater is necessary. Later, it will be replaced by a 9600-bit/s, 70-cm link. Further discussions addressed linking PBBSs in Southern Africa. ZS6KE, an HF gateway, is also now linked to ZS6SAT, the SA AMSAT PBBS.

The question of amateur operation from Maputo, Mozambique was also discussed. KA7TWQ is returning to the US for vacation, but says he will seek permission from the Maputo government to operate upon his return there.

from AMSAT NA News Service

RSGB DATA SYMPOSIUM

As part of the 75th anniversary of The Radio Society of Great Britain, the First RSGB Data Symposium will be held at Harrow School near

London on July 22-23. While the program has not been finalized yet, the symposium will cover as wide a range of Amateur Radio data-oriented topics as possible including AMTOR, RTTY and packet radio at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. All are invited to participate by lecturing, asking questions at the open forum or by simply attending and enjoying the event. Further details can be obtained by contacting David Gough, G6EFQ, at RSGB Headquarters (Lambda House, Cranborne Rd, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 3JE, England) well in advance. Also, any individual or group wishing to present a paper (which would be published afterwords), lecture or contribute in any way, please contact Ingemar Lundegard, G3GJW at 'Saxby,' Botsom Ln, West Kingsdown, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 6BL, England.

from Ingemar Lundegard, G3GJW

HAMBIT PAPERS SOUGHT

HAMBIT '88, the third international congress of Amateur Radio and digital techniques, which in past years was sponsored by the Italian Amateur Radio Association (ARI), will be held in Florence, Italy on November 27, 1988.

Papers are invited in either Italian or English in order to permit wider participation and dissemination of information. Papers should be original work of the authors.

Areas of interest include, but are not limited to, the following topics.

o Telecommunications.

o Electronic circuit simulation and CAD.

o Uses of computers in measurements.

o Digital signal coding, decoding and processing.

o Civil security applications.

o Computers as aids for the handicapped.

Applications may use any kind of personal computer, including Sinclair, Commodore, Apple, MSX or MS-DOS.

A special HAMBIT '88 award will be presented to the author(s) of the best contribution for a tactile electronic board project simulating a video display for the blind.

Papers should be typed, double-spaced, on white paper, A4 format (210 x 297 mm/8.27 x 11.69 in) with 35-mm/1.38-inch margins on all sides, camera-ready for reproduction in the proceedings. Papers should not exceed 20 pages in length including tables and figures. The cover page must contain only the title, full name of the author(s), affiliation, address, telephone number and a signed copyright release relinquishing all rights. A short biography and abstract are requested. Two copies of the paper must arrive no later than August 31, 1988, at the following address:

HAMBIT '88 Coordinator
Carlo L. Ciapetti, I5CLC
Via Trieste, 36
50139 Florence
ITALY

Authors will be notified of acceptance by telegram before September 30.

Because of time limitations, it may not be possible for authors to present detailed material concerning their projects, implementations or studies during their talks. Therefore, authors may bring posters not exceeding 1 x 2 meters/39 x 79 inches for display. Please advise the coordinator as to the theme for author posters no later than October 15.

Corporate donations of equipment for prizes and sponsorship for travel reimbursement are welcomed. Part of the program and proceedings will be typed in Braille.

from Carlo L. Ciapetti, I5CLC,
HAMBIT '88 Coordinator

NEW EDITORS FOR CONNECT INTERNATIONAL

John Theodorson, G4MTP, and Neil Rimmer, G4JTY, will assume editorship of Radio Society of Great Britain's Connect International starting with the March 1988 issue. (Due to recent editorial changes, there will be no February issue of the publication; all existing subscribers will have their subscriptions extended by one month.)

NEW CD-ROM CALL SIGN DIRECTORY

The WA4ONG PBBS/Buckmaster Publishing on-line CD ROM Directory is now available for remote requests. The request format is similar to the REQFIL format used by WA7MBL PBBSs. To use, simply send a message to SP REQQTH @ WA4ONG. And at the "Enter subject..." prompt, type the call sign whose QTH you seek, followed by t@ and the call sign of your home PBBS.

For example, if you wish to obtain the mailing address of WØRLI and your home PBBS is W3IWI, you would log on to W3IWI and, at the command prompt, type:

SP REQQTH @ WA4ONG <CR>

At the "Enter subject..." prompt, type:

WØRLI @ W3IWI <CR>

At the "Send message..." prompt, type:

CRTL-Z <CR>

Note, that there is no text in the message. If any is included, it will be ignored, however, the REQQTH request will still be honored.

The data base has been updated to December, 1987 with a new CD-ROM from Buckmaster Publishing. (Those accessing the WA4ONG PBBS directly can still use the OS QTH command, except that now you can request more that one call sign per command.)

from WA4ONG @ WA4ONG

PACKET RADIO IN SCHOOL?

Joe Keener, KB5EXF, a teacher at Leander High School in Leander, Texas, would like to get in touch with other schools that have amateur packet-radio stations for the purpose of classroom-to-classroom packet-radio QSOs. If you can help Joe,

please contact him at P. O. Box 218, Leander High School, Leander, TX 78641 or telephone 512-259-1198.

HELP WANTED AT TAPR

Tucson Amateur Packet Radio, Inc, (TAPR) is in need of a bookkeeper. The duties involve regular monthly posting of items to an IBM PC-based accounting package, the generation of monthly reports for the Board of Directors and interfacing to a CPA for tax returns, etc. The ideal candidate would have similar experience, either professionally or as a volunteer for another organization. If you are interested, please contact Scott Loftesness, W3VS, TAPR Secretary/Treasurer, via CompuServe's EasyPlex or telephone 408-779-0438.

GATEWAY CONTRIBUTIONS

Submissions for publication in Gateway are welcome. You may submit material via the US mail to:

Gateway
Stan Horzepa, WA1LOU
75 Kreger Drive
Wolcott, CT 06716-2702

or electronically, via CompuServe to user ID 70645,247. Via telephone, your editor can be reached at 203-879-1348 on evenings and weekends, and he can switch a modem on line to receive text at 300, 1200, or 2400 bauds.

Gateway: The ARRL Packet Radio Newsletter is published by the:

American Radio Relay League
225 Main Street
Newington, CT 06111

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Subscriptions are available to ARRL members and nonmembers, at the following rates:

For 25 issues of Gateway:
In the US
ARRL Member $6.00
Nonmember $9.00
In the US, Canada and Mexico by First Class mail
ARRL Member $11.00
Nonmember $14.00
Elsewhere by Airmail
ARRL Member $14.00
Nonmember $17.00

Prices are subject to change without notice. Remittance must be in US funds, and checks must be drawn on a bank in the US.

Gateway: The ARRL
Packet Radio Newsletter
American Radio Relay League
225 Main St.
Newington, CT 06111

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